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precise description of the Inferno (so different from Milton's sublime but vague Hell) may owe its precision chiefly to a medieval habit of definite comparison, but the tender green of leaves just opened, the delicate pink of apple-blossoms, a sunbeam shining on a bed of flowers through rifted clouds,—such things Dante must have seen to describe so truly.

Among many interesting details, Professor Kuhns points out; the union, remarkable in a medieval poet, of the literary and scientific; the absence of color in Dante's references to the sea (in this Dante is like Shakspeare, who twice calls the sea red, twice green); the absence of blue flowers in the *Divina Commedia*; the few references to the olive and vine, and to the favorite birds of troubadours and minnesingers, the lark and the nightingale; the vague references to horses, and the mention of only the disagreeable traits of dogs, and (a point in which Swinburne resembles Dante) the constant references, especially in the *Paradiso*, to *light*.

In the last chapter, we find that

"All the references to Nature in the *Divina Commedia*, taken together, produce a picture which is at the same time broader and more detailed than anything we find among the ancients" (p. 183). "Of course, the great number of phenomena which Dante alludes to in his figures are general and well-known, many of them frequently used by his predecessors. . . . But there are other phases of Nature which Dante was the first to introduce into poetry, such as the hand bathed and smoking in winter, the change of color in burning paper, the lizard flashing across the sunlit road, and especially the phosphorescent glow on water at night" (p. 186).

Finally, though Dante follows the ancients in using Nature as a stage or background, he goes beyond them in that which more than anything else distinguishes the moderns from the ancients,—the so-called sentimental feeling for Nature; only in Dante it is "not so highly developed, not so self-conscious, and especially not regarded as of such high importance in art" (p. 198).

There are two instances of careless grammar, one on p. 143: "more cities and *less* unbroken forests;" "the other on p. 163: "passages . . . are *equally* varied and beautiful as those." On p. 161, is the first instance

I have seen in serious literature of the word "Kinetoscopic."

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GOTHIC GRAMMAR.

Gotisches Elementarbuch. Von Dr. S. W. STREITBERG. Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1897. 12mo, pp. xii, 200.

STREITBERG'S *Gotisches Elementarbuch* erscheint als zweiter band der unter seiner leitung herausgegebenen *Sammlung von Elementarbüchern der Altgermanischen Dialekte*. Wohl mancher wird dem unternehmen bei seiner ankündigung skeptisch gegenüber gestanden haben. Ein wirkliches desideratum war doch nach erscheinen von Holthausens *Altisländischem Elementarbuch* und den gekürzten ausgaben von Noreens und Braunes grammatiken nur für das altsächsische und auch wohl für das mittelhochdeutsche vorhanden, welches letztere einer ausführlicheren behandlung bedarf, als Paul in seinem buche liefert. Jetzt wo neben Kahles tüchtiger leistung auch Streitbergs buch vorliegt, werden diese bedenken schwinden. Namentlich wird das letztere sich neben Braunes grammatik mit vorteil benutzen lassen. So bringt die literarische und geschichtliche einleitung (p. 1-18) vieles, was man bei Braune vermisst und was der studierende nirgends so bequem beisammen findet; und auch die syntax bringt bei aller kürze das wesentliche in gediegener form, wobei die neuesten forschungen besondere berücksichtigung gefunden haben.

Ueber zweck und anlage des buchs spricht sich der verfasser ausser in dem vorwort des weiteren in seiner selbstanzeige (I. F. A. vii, 248 ff). aus, wo auch einige nachträge und verbesserungen zu finden sind. Danach geht der verfasser in seiner darstellung überall vom laut aus im gegensatz zu Braune. Wieviel dadurch gewonnen wird, kann nur die praxis entscheiden, worin mir zur zeit noch erfahrungen mangeln. So viel steht jedoch fest, dass diese anordnung zugleich die unsicherheit unserer kenntnis gotischer lautwerte dem lernenden bedenklicher vor augen rückt. Ueber gotische phonologie sind gerade in

letzter zeit sehr verdienstliche untersuchungen erschienen, die wenigstens einige punkte der lösung näher bringen. Ich erwähne die folgenden: Wilhelm Luft, *Die Umschreibungen der fremden Namen bei Wulfila* (K. Z. xxxv. 295 ff); eine durch ihre prägnante kürze angenehm auffallende arbeit, zu der schon J. Wright in seinem Primer (p. 244) angeregt hatte; Gustav Kosinna, *Zur Geschichte des Volksnamens Griechen* (Festschrift z. Doktorjubelfeier Karl Weinholds, 1896, pp. 27 ff); G. A. Hench, *The voiced spirants in Gothic*. (Journal of Germanic Philology, i, 45 sq.); R. Thurneysen, *Spirantenwechsel im Gotischen* (I. F. viii, 208 ff). Näher an dieser stelle darauf einzugehen muss ich mir versagen, so sehr auch die oft divergierenden ergebnisse dazu einladen.

Bemerkt sei noch im einzelnen, dass Streitberg in seiner auffassung des *h* in allen stellungen als hauchlaut meiner ansicht nach zu weit geht; das verbietet schon die brechungserscheinung und wird durch die lange erhaltung in anderen dialekten unwahrscheinlich gemacht. Wie diese annahme schon fürs urwestgermanische geltung haben soll (p. 25), ist mir unklar. Der Verweis (p. 101) über den vokalismus von *lauan* bezieht sich auf §71, nicht §70. *snorjo* hat §156 versehentlich ein kürzezeichen erhalten.

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SPANISH PUBLICATIONS.

III.¹

7. *First Spanish Readings*. Selected and edited, with Notes and Vocabulary, by JOHN E. MATZKE, Ph. D., Professor of Romanic Languages, Leland Stanford Jr. University. Boston: U.S.A. D. C. Heath & Co., 1897. 8vo, pp. iv+219.

Nor often does a textbook appear under auspices so favorable as those that attend the publication of Matzke's *First Spanish Readings*. It is fourteen years since Knapp produced his *Spanish Readings*, and although during that time numerous excellent books for beginners in other languages have come out, no attempt has been made to provide

Spanish classes with a Reader less difficult and wearisome than that of Knapp. As for the few Spanish texts that have been edited for American Schools, they are not fit to be placed before beginners, with the one exception of *Doña Perfecta*, a book that, notwithstanding the merit of the edition, has the disadvantage of being a continuous story of more than two hundred pages, the notes to which, written by one whose studies move more especially in the field of literature than in that of language, do not unfrequently fail to give the information on matters of Spanish grammar with the exactness that must be demanded of books intended for the incipient learner.

In these circumstances, the announcement of a volume of Spanish readings, to be published in Heath's famous series of Modern Language Texts, could not but raise the expectation that we were at last to be furnished with the book needed, particularly as the collection was to be selected and edited, with Notes and a Vocabulary, by the head of the Department of Romance Languages in one of the large institutions of this country, who was already favorably known as an editor of texts and a writer on intricate linguistic subjects. It is true that the editor was not before the public as having devoted especial attention to Spanish, but it was reasonable to assume that the qualities of his more ambitious earlier work would be displayed to still greater advantage in this book for beginners.

The little volume lies before me, neat and trim like everything published by Heath, and the impression caused by a first glance through its contents is one of genuine pleasure. The editor has not allowed himself to be blinded by the reputation of the short stories of the foremost living authors of Spain, Valera, Pereda, Pardo Bazán, Coloma, and others. The texts he has selected, though all by writers of merit, are not there to serve as specimens of the greatest literary work of recent years, but to provide reading material for beginners in the language. Each selection is complete in itself, whereby its value is greatly enhanced, and with considerable tact the collection is arranged so as to begin with easy texts and grow more difficult in regular progression.

¹ Cf. MOD. LANG. NOTES for June, 1897 (vol. xii, cols. 355-364).